TO THE

MEMORY

Of the Right Reverend Father in God,

JOHN, Lord Bishop of Oxford, and Dean of Christ-Church.

A Pindarick Ode.

1.

TOO Rigid, too severe,
Th' unalterable Laws of Fate appear,
That not one Sublunary thing is free;
Kings ev'n like Beggars must obey,
And bowing down before Death's Majesty,
Own him a Monarch Mightier far than they.
Right Reverend, Learned, Wise, and Just;
Are glorious Epithets indeed for Dust;
But cannot change the Black Decree,
Or move Remorse in too unreasonable Destiny.
Not a whole Flood of Pious Orphan's Tears,
Myriads of Sighs, and earnest Pray'rs,
The Poor's Affliction, and the Church's Cares,
Nor His Tormentor's stock of Skill,
Could alter Fates determin'd stubborn Will.

2.

It's pity, is it not?
It's fit indeed that worthless We
Should take the common Lot;
But Prophets, and (Good *FELL*) so Great as Thee,
Should never Dye.
Oh Scandalous Mortality!
That ev'n the second *Stagyrite*, ev'n Wise Thou,
Should'st among dull *Plebeians* bow;
And mixt with Fools, should'st undistinguisht lye.
When the long Toil of Thy good Work was done,
When Thy most Glorious Race was Run,
Why did'st Thou Travel on the common Road?
Why did'st not then *Elijah*'s Chariot take,
In Fire and Clouds a wond'rous Journey make,
Through th' *Adamantine Gate*, to th' Throne of God?
For since so much like Him Thou liv'dst, why then
Did'st Thou (but Thou wast Meek) submit to Dye like Men?

3.

Tell me Grave Sages (but I am too blame;
Ye cannot do't, tho' intimate with Fame;
Ye cannot in Time's Memory tell)
When one more Just, more Wise, more Meek, more Noble, fell;
'Twas wonderful to see,
With what unconquer'd Spirit he
Bore His Distempers Rage;
As if in that Extremity,
(Besides th' Oppression of unactive Age)
He had from Misery been free.
Oh fortitude of Soul! nor stopt it there;
For when the Prince of Terrors did appear,
Undaunted still he lay,
And did his Summons courteously Obey;
Thought it not hard to bend,
But entertain'd the Tyrant as a Friend.

4.

Thus Joyful of its wisht-for Liberty,
His Soul (that glorious Eagle) flew;
Active and Strong (for well the way he knew)
To th' everlasting Seat of Bliss;
Where (so he Taught) Eternity of Glory is.
There among Saints He Crowned sits;
Saints, some of which His good Example made;
And among Spirits Divine such Estimation gets,
As (while He liv'd on Earth) to him the Zealous paid.
And still with us His Sacred Memory
Shall quicken Souls to Piety;
For Prophets in their Graves still the great work pursue,
As good *Elisha*'s Bones could Wonders do.

5.

Of what I've done, I'm conscious now,
And so Thy Sacred Dust with Rev'rence bow;
I cannot mount on such a lofty Wing,
Thy *Apotheosis* to Sing;
My Numbers will but ill Thy Hearse become.
When all the Sweet, the Skilful Choristers are dumb,
A far more decent Honour they do show,
In awful Silence o're Thy Tomb,
Than I at best could hope to do;
Who wait so late upon Thy Urn,
And in an Artless Muse's Language Mourn.
I should Prophane, should I presume to raise
Poetick *Obelisks* of Praise;
Fame's Noble Basis thou Thy self hast laid,
Without a Mercenary Poet's aid:
For of Thy exemplary Charity,
Such Living Monuments there be,
As Ages yet Unborn shall tell,
If they but hear the single Name of *FELL*;
'Tis a compendious, glorious Chronicle.

EPITAPH.

Urna tenet cineres, animam Deus, inclyta fama
Conservat nomen, quid periisse putes?

Licensed Decemb. 24th. 1686. Rob. Midgley.